

EPA Region III

Office of Public Affairs

EARLY BIRD HEADLINES

Friday, June 29, 2012

*** MORNING HOT LIST ***

Appropriations Committee Sends Bill Cutting EPA Funding to House Floor

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT

The House Appropriations Committee on June 28 approved a \$28 billion funding bill containing a 17 percent cut in EPA funding and numerous policy riders that would restrict the agency's ability to enforce regulations under the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act. The committee voted 26-19 to move the fiscal year 2013 appropriations bill for Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies (no bill number assigned) to the House floor. The bill would cut EPA's funding to \$7 billion in fiscal 2013, a \$1.4 billion decrease from the fiscal 2012 enacted level. Those cuts would mostly be achieved by reducing funding for the state clean water and drinking water revolving funds and state and tribal grant programs (118 DEN A-6, 6/20/12). The legislation contains a number of provisions that would prohibit appropriated funds from being used for certain regulatory actions, including limiting EPA's ability to develop final guidance updating the definition of waters under the jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act, expanding the stormwater discharge program under Section 402 of the Clean Water Act, and implementing President Obama's National Oceans Policy. The bill also contains a rider that would prevent the Interior Department's Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement from moving ahead with a planned "stream buffer" rule that Republicans say would result in job losses in the coal mining industry.

Officials say some cash from Marcellus Shale impact fees could flow your way

LANCASTER NEWSPAPERS Just because there are no deep-drilled natural gas wells in Lancaster County doesn't mean the county won't share in the newly established Marcellus Shale impact fees. One estimate floated by the Lancaster County Planning Commission indicates a first installment could send \$2.2 million into county coffers. The money would have to be used for bridges and parks and preservation of natural lands. The county commissioners were briefed on the revenue-sharing from Marcellus Shale by county planners in April, the same month Act 13 went into effect. Act 13 was passed by legislators after months of debate, primarily to help communities where drilling is taking place offset impacts to roads and services. The legislation requires drillers to pay a fee per well, based on natural gas prices and the Consumer Price Index. In 2012, drillers are paying \$50,000 per well. An estimated \$180 million is expected to be generated when payments are due to the state Public Utility Commission by Sept. 1. Sixty percent of the money will go to the 37 counties where so far 4,000 Marcellus Shale wells have been drilled. The remainder will go to various state agencies to address statewide issues. They include county conservation districts, Fish and Boat Commission, Public Utility Commission,

Department of Environmental Protection, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, Office of State Fire Commissioner and Department of Transportation. Lancaster County's share would come from this allotment. County officials have not been informed of any specifics on amounts and when they might get the money. "It's my understanding there will be some Act 13 money that comes to Lancaster County, but I just don't know how much and when," Commissioner Craig Lehman said. "We don't know what strings are attached."

Beneath the surface: shale gas boom shapes economy in NW PA

ERIE TIMES-NEWS The world's first energy boom, born near Titusville in 1859, shaped both the economy and the physical landscape of northwestern Pennsylvania. Forests fell, and derricks sprouted in their place as landowners and speculators scrambled to cash in. Today, more than 150 years later, there are few visual reminders in this corner of Pennsylvania to mark the arrival of the nation's most recent energy find. At least for now, wells tapping the Marcellus Shale are being drilled in southwestern Pennsylvania and in the eastern reaches of the state's northern tier. But not here. At least not yet. But look beneath the surface and you'll find growing evidence that the shale gas boom is already helping to shape the local economy, and that the trend is likely to continue. Ask Nancy Taylor, who retired Friday after serving as longtime spokeswoman for National Fuel Gas Distribution Corp. Less than five years ago, in July 2008, she found herself with bad news to share. Gas prices were about to spike. And unless something changed, an anticipated 40-percent rate hike might just be the beginning. But something did change. Since then, the price of natural gas has fallen by as much as 50 percent, and dire predictions about future price hikes never came to pass. A portion of that decrease can be attributed to a poor economy, which has held down demand, she said. But Taylor said the discovery of massive gas reserves has played an equally important role. A lower monthly gas bill might be the only difference that most of us see. But it's hardly the only difference. Ask Dennis Solensky, executive director of the Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority. A decade or so ago, he was faced with a decision. Like the rest of the mass transit industry, he had to lay a bet on what technology would power the next generation of buses. Solensky played the odds that seemed to suggest hybrid-diesel buses, capable of more than 4 mpg, were the way to go.

New laws foster environment, business

MARYLAND GAZETTE NEWSPAPERS July 1 marks not only the start of the two draggiest summer months and a new fiscal year, but it is also the date a bunch of laws take effect. A few of the more important measures concern the environment, in particular the health of the Chesapeake Bay; others affect the business community. Perhaps the most significant new environmental law requires the 10 largest jurisdictions in the state to collect stormwater remediation fees. Stormwater runoff is a major source of Bay pollution. The fee, the amount of which was left to the discretion of the nine largest counties and Baltimore city, would be based on how much pavement a property contains. Under the legislation, counties and municipalities would plant trees and take other measures to reduce pollution from runoff. A second new law doubles the so-called "flush" tax from \$2.50 to \$5 a month for any household whose wastewater is discharged into the Chesapeake or coastal bays. The flush tax increase is projected to help pay for upgrades to 67 major wastewater treatment plants and decrease the amount of nitrogen pollution flowing into the Bay by 3.7 million pounds a year. Another major environmental bill requires counties to adopt a "tiered" system of rules to restrict new housing served by septic systems. The measure was designed to curb the waste that flows from new housing developments into the Bay. The legislature watered down Gov. Martin O'Malley's stronger, initial proposal. A separate Department of the Environment regulation issued in early May bans the future use of septics unless builders install modern technology systems for nitrogen removal.

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Regional planners OK \$3.8B for transportation projects A regional planning panel on Thursday approved \$3.8 billion in funding for 385 transportation projects in Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania suburbs over the next four years. The highway and transit projects include continuing work on the long-awaited connection between I-95 and the Pennsylvania Turnpike, and SEPTA's new "smart card" fare system. The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission adopted its "transportation improvement program" for fiscal years 2013-16, establishing a blueprint for projects in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties. A similar plan for area New Jersey counties - Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Mercer - will be produced next year. The DVRPC list includes all transportation projects that intend to use federal funds, along with all state-funded projects. Among the major projects:

Bucks County: Pennsylvania Turnpike/I-95 interchange, Phase 1. \$424 million.

Chester County: U.S. 202, Exton Bypass to Route 29. \$77 million.

Delaware County: U.S. 322, environmental mitigation for widening. \$21 million.

Montgomery County: Lafayette Street extension and reconstruction. \$8.6 million.

Philadelphia: I-95 reconstruction. \$536 million.

Blog: Jersey beaches still beset by pollution, report finds New Jersey saw a spike in beach closings last summer, a national environmental group has found. It blamed, in part, the wet weather of last year. Heavy rainstorms can overwhelm sewer systems, resulting in discharges to waterways. In coastal areas, the stuff can wind up in the ocean and along beachfronts in pretty short order. "The results confirm the nation's seashores continue to suffer from stormwater runoff and sewage pollution that can make people sick and harm coastal economies," said the Natural Resources Defense Council in a press release. This is the 22nd year the organization prepared such a report. It found that, overall, America's beaches saw the third-highest number of closings and "advisory" days. The number of days jumped 20 percent in New Jersey, compared to 2010. The report, *Testing the Waters: A Guide to Water Quality at Vacation Beaches*, analyzes government data on beachwater testing results at more than 3,000 locations nationwide. Beachwood Beach West in Ocean County was included on a nationwide "repeat offender" list, "indicating persistent contamination problems over the last five years," the NRDC said. "This time of year, New York and New Jersey beaches are flooded with visitors from near and far, but unfortunately they're often inundated with dangerous pollution that can make swimmers sick as well," said NRDC senior attorney Lawrence Levine. "Last year – thanks in part to Hurricane Irene and record rainfall – this mess led to a massive uptick in beach closings in the area. Fortunately, we know how to make our beaches safer, and the region is starting to embrace greener solutions that can lead to fewer interrupted trips to the beach."

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

Western Pa. polluter's sentence sparks dispute The lawyer representing a Greene County businessman sentenced to probation for polluting waterways in six counties with illegally dumped wastewater has accused the state attorney general's office of trying to "bully" the sentencing judge into imposing a harsher penalty. Greene County Common Pleas Judge Farley Toothman this month sentenced Robert Allan Shipman, owner of Allan's Waste Water Service, to seven years of probation and 1,750 hours of community service, in addition to \$257,316 in restitution, a \$100,000 fine and a \$25,000 charitable contribution to be paid to the attorney general's office. The state prosecutor's office was angered by the probation sentence and said in a motion for reconsideration this week that Mr. Shipman should go to jail to send a message to others who would deliberately pollute the state. Mr. Shipman's lawyer, Christopher Blackwell, countered Wednesday that the sentence was carefully crafted after an all-day sentencing hearing and that Deputy Attorney General Amy Carnicella, who wrote the state's motion, is trying to force the judge into a re-sentencing. "The entire tone of the [motion] is designed to embarrass, belittle, and intimidate a judge who produced a thoughtful, well-reasoned opinion that brings honor to the bench," wrote Mr. Blackwell. "Such conduct should not only be quashed immediately, but should be chastised and admonished" for its failure to follow the rules of professional conduct, he said. Mr. Blackwell said Ms. Carnicella's motion insulted the judge by suggesting that he did not fully grasp the magnitude of Mr. Shipman's environmental crimes.

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE REVIEW

South Buffalo supervisors to decide on drilling bid The South Buffalo Township Supervisors will decide next month whether to allow the township's first horizontal Marcellus Shale gas wells. The township planning commission Thursday recommended that the supervisors grant a conditional use permit that XTO Energy needs to drill up to three wells on property off of West Scenic Drive. However, commission members expressed concern about the condition of the narrow, gravel road between the drilling site and where trucks would exit onto Iron Bridge Road. As many as 120 trucks a day could travel the approximately mile-long portion, off of which two homes are located. "That's a road that's really going to take a beating with all that equipment," said planning commission member Kay Covone. Shawn Gallagher, an attorney with Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney who represents XTO, said crews would widen Scenic Drive, maintain it during drilling and restore the road once finished. If the state Department of Environmental Protection grants the company's drilling permit, work on the drill pad would begin in December, company officials said. The wells would be drilled into the Marcellus shale formation and then continue horizontally for 4,000 to 5,000 feet. It's unlikely the company will drill all three wells at once. Each well takes three to four weeks, with 24-hour drilling. Trucks likely would haul in the 4.5 million gallons of water needed for the hydraulic fracturing process needed to release the natural gas from the shale.

ERIE TIMES NEWS

Beneath the surface: shale gas boom shapes economy in NW PA The world's first energy boom, born near Titusville in 1859, shaped both the economy and the physical landscape of northwestern Pennsylvania. Forests fell, and derricks sprouted in their place as landowners and speculators scrambled to cash in. Today, more than 150 years later, there are few visual reminders in this corner of Pennsylvania to mark the arrival of the nation's most recent energy find. At least for now, wells tapping the Marcellus Shale are being drilled in southwestern Pennsylvania and in the eastern reaches of the state's northern tier. But not here. At least not yet. But look beneath the surface and you'll find growing evidence that the shale gas boom is already helping to shape the local economy, and that the trend is likely to continue. Ask Nancy Taylor, who retired Friday after serving as longtime spokeswoman for National Fuel Gas Distribution Corp. Less than five years ago, in July 2008, she found herself with bad news to share. Gas prices were about to spike. And unless something changed, an anticipated 40-percent rate hike might just be the beginning. But something did change. Since then, the price of natural gas has fallen by as much as 50 percent, and dire predictions about future price hikes never came to pass. A portion of that decrease can be attributed to a poor economy, which has held down demand, she said. But Taylor said the discovery of massive gas reserves has played an equally important role. A lower monthly gas bill might be the only difference that most of us see. But it's hardly the only difference. Ask Dennis Solensky, executive director of the Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority. A decade or so ago, he was faced with a decision. Like the rest of the mass transit industry, he had to lay a bet on what technology would power the next generation of buses. Solensky played the odds that seemed to suggest hybrid-diesel buses, capable of more than 4 mpg, were the way to go. They were cheaper to maintain and returned slightly better mileage than buses that ran on compressed natural gas. Time and one of the world's great natural gas discoveries have turned that equation on its head, he said. Diesel prices soared as the price of natural gas fell. Today, with compressed natural gas selling for the equivalent of 77 cents a gallon, the difference in the price for the two forms of energy is dramatic. Based on fuel-use figures supplied by the EMTA, the energy cost of an all-diesel fleet would be \$1.72 million a year. By comparison, energy costs for a fleet powered entirely by natural gas would be less than a third as much at \$412,000. "Natural gas has become much, much cheaper than diesel, and it appears that it's going to continue this way," Solensky said. Solensky, who credits the Marcellus rush with driving down prices, said the EMTA's new facility will include a fueling station that could eventually be opened to other area fleets.

Erie water customers asked to cut use Erie Water Works is asking customers to cut back on water usage as it works to bring its main water treatment plant back online. The utility on Thursday issued a water conservation notice asking customers to curtail consumption by 10 percent until further notice. It also started calling customers through a reverse-911 system early Thursday. The conservation notice was the first request in at least 13 years, Erie Water Works Chief Executive Paul Vojtek said. "We're not at the critical stage, but we're asking people to do it to avoid any type of emergency situation," Vojtek said. Erie Water Works' main water treatment facility, the Richard S. Wasielewski Water Treatment Plant at the foot of Sommerheim Drive in Millcreek Township, was shut down in

March 2011 for a \$42 million upgrade that includes the installation of a state-of-the-art water filtration system. Since then, the utility has used its backup Chestnut Water Treatment Plant on Chestnut Street to service 52,000 customers throughout the region.

Ridge, Lake Erie Region Conservancy to receive awards Tom Ridge and the Lake Erie Region Conservancy were to receive awards Thursday night in Pittsburgh from the Pennsylvania Environmental Council. Ridge, the former Erie resident and Pennsylvania governor who became the first Homeland Security secretary, was to be presented with a lifetime achievement award at the event. Ridge was cited by the council for championing the idea that the economy and the environment can prosper in harmony and that sustainability should be part of government. The Erie-based conservancy was named a recipient of a 2012 Western Pennsylvania Environmental Award. The awards honor the achievements of organizations, businesses and individuals in a range of environmental initiatives, according to a news release.

LANCASTER NEWSPAPERS

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YORK DISPATCH

Commentary: Turf and the Chesapeake Bay Watershed As part of the natural world, just like every other creature with which we share the earth, we depend on the natural world for our well-being. Fortunately, the brain that allows us to adapt and cope with all types of climatic environments, also provides us with the capacity of "realization" -- we understand that there are consequences when we attempt to divorce ourselves from the constraints of the natural world. Today, one of these "divorcements" from the natural world is taking place as we convert our farms and forests to lawns. Our love for lawns is reflected in the 2010 Chesapeake Stormwater Network study, *The Clipping Point: Turf Cover Estimates for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and Management Implications*. Although the term "turf grass," as used in the study, includes areas such as grasslands at schools, as well as in parks, cemeteries, golf courses, airports, roadsides and median strips, by far the largest component is lawns at 75 percent of the total. According to the study, turf grass is now the Chesapeake Bay Watershed's largest "crop" with 3.8 million acres (9.5 percent) of the watershed's almost 41 million acres, versus 9.2 percent for row crops (corn, soybean, and wheat), 7.4 percent for hay/alfalfa and 7.4 percent for pasture. Estimates are that in the last 30 years the amount of turf grass has tripled. The study goes on to explain both the environmental and economic costs (e.g., financial cost of fertilizers and pesticides and their pollution of streams) to not only the lawn owner, but the rest of us as well. One statistic that sticks in my mind is the statement by Tom Schueler, author of the study: "Summer lawn irrigation is calculated to suck nearly 7,875 cubic feet per second (cfs) of river flow to [the] Bay during summer months. To put this amount of water consumption in perspective, it is roughly five times the combined summer flow of the

Choptank, James, Monacacy, Patapsco, Pamunkey, Patuxent and Rappahanock rivers in an average year."

WAYNE INDEPENDENT

Passion rules when it comes to hydrofracking Wayne County, Pa. — There's little doubt that hydraulic fracturing, commonly known as hydrofracking, is controversial. There's also little doubt those on both sides of the issue are passionate in their beliefs. And for both groups, the debate continues to grow in the mid-Atlantic region where many are clamoring for more fracking while others want it stopped altogether.

PROS: Cheaper energy: One major benefit, says Bloomberg Businessweek, is the price of natural gas continues to fall as more wells are opened up in the U.S. With a volatile oil market, those in favor of fracking say it is a way to extract cheap energy with few risks.

Low risk: Opponents charge that fracking is dangerous and contaminates the environment, especially the water supply. But proponents say the Environmental Protection Agency has yet to make any significant findings related to water contamination. They point to the controversial town of Dimock, Pa., where residents say water has been contaminated for years. EPA testing recently concluded they could find no relation to the fracking activities and contamination of water in Dimock.

More jobs: Industry specialists say increased employment not only means those working in the field but also those in local restaurants, auto shops and more who support those in the fracking business. Marian Schweighofer, director of the pro-fracking Northern Wayne Property Owners Alliance in Damsacus, Pa., says for rural areas in Pennsylvania and New York, fracking could turn the economy around.

CONS: Environmentally unsafe: Probably the biggest "con" given by those opposed to fracking is contamination of drinking water. That single issue has stalled any shale exploration in far eastern Pennsylvania and western New York, where the Delaware River Basin Commission has the final say in fracking. Opponents, including movie director Josh Fox who directed the documentary "Gasland," say the science is incomplete and development should not take place. They point to the fact the Delaware River is the largest supplier of water to New York City and many other east coast cities. Fox also believes his allies are starting to make headway. "There is no question we are winning the PR battle," said Fox, who calls Wayne County, Pa. home. "We are changing the public's perception on a fraction of what the gas industry spends a day on their PR machine."

Fracking fracas Wayne County, Pa. — Few — if any in Wayne County — need to be told that hydraulic fracturing is a controversial means of extracting natural gas from the Marcellus Shale beneath our feet. There are those convinced it can save the American economy and put thousands back to work in the worst economy since the Great Depression and that it could lead to energy independence for the country. Then there are those who say the process is just too risky to public and environmental health, especially in this area, which millions depend on for their drinking water. Two of the bigger names in this debate come from right here in Wayne County. Tom Shepstone, well known as a spokesman for Energy In Depth, an industry lobbying group, resides in Honesdale. Filmmaker Josh Fox — whose film Gasland became known around the world after a famous scene depicting a Colorado man lighting the water from his kitchen faucet on fire went viral on the internet — is connected to the area through land his family owns in Damascus Township.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Pa.)

Deal reached on tax breaks for Pa. refinery HARRISBURG, Pa. — Top state Republican lawmakers have reached an agreement on a package of tax breaks that Gov. Tom Corbett has sought in hopes of encouraging the construction of a multibillion-dollar petrochemical refinery and an associated chemical manufacturing industry in Pennsylvania, lawmakers and legislative aides said Thursday. Under the agreement, there would be no limit on the tax break - Corbett had proposed capping it at \$66 million a year, or almost \$1.7 billion total. But it would keep the Republican governor's proposal for a tax credit of a nickel per gallon of ethane used by a qualifying refinery owner. The credit would last for 25 years, beginning in 2017, as Corbett had initially proposed. At \$1.7 billion, lawmakers say it would be Pennsylvania's largest financial incentive package ever, but the value of the tax credit could actually exceed \$66 million a year, or \$1.7 billion total.

Dumper's lawyer chides AG for harsh sentence plea WAYNESBURG, Pa. — The attorney for a southwestern Pennsylvania man whose company dumped millions of gallons of drilling and other wastewater into streams and mine shafts says a state prosecutor disrespected the judge for objecting to a probation sentence. Christopher Blackwell, the attorney for 50-year-old Robert Allan Shipman, says the probation sentence was proper under state guidelines. Blackwell also says Deputy Attorney General Amy Carnicella's motion to have a Greene County judge impose a prison sentence instead of seven years' probation ignores the other penalties Shipman endured. Shipman must perform 1,750 hours of community service, pay \$257,000 in restitution plus a fine of \$100,000. The attorney says Shipman agreed to not only get rid of Allan's Waste Water Service, which did the illegal dumping, he also got divested a legitimate water treatment business that operated legally.

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL

Delaware closer to getting a national park WASHINGTON — Sen. Tom Carper of Delaware serves the only state without a national park, and he's been trying to change that for 10 years. But after a House subcommittee hearing for The First State National Historic Park Act on Thursday, he's finally feeling confident that it might happen. That's because the hearing also addressed other bills, including House Resolution 5987, a bill that would establish the Manhattan Project National Historic Park, composed of individual locations in three different states. This is similar to the Delaware act, H.R. 624, which was introduced by Rep. John Carney and would establish a national park by linking seven locations throughout New Castle, Kent and Sussex counties. Rep. Doc Hastings, R-Wash, is the sponsor of the Manhattan Project bill and the chairman of the Natural Resources Committee, which held the hearing in the National Parks, Forests and Public Lands subcommittee. "So (Hastings) has an interest in moving legislation creating a new national park, a different kind of national park. And as it turns out, so do we," Carper said. "And I'm interested in helping him with his idea. And my hope is that in the end, he and his colleagues join Congressman Carney in enacting our idea." The National Park Service supports the Delaware and the Manhattan Project bills, said Victor Knox, associate director of park planning. The only contention is that one of Delaware's sites, Ryves Holt House in Sussex County, does not have enough national importance to be included in a park, Knox said.

Falcons flying high above city WILMINGTON — Days before the Fourth of July, gazes turned skyward as spectators searched the skies for a glimpse of the world's fastest birds. A group of dedicated birdwatchers and casual observers milled around on the roof of a city parking garage Thursday night, peering into binoculars and telescopes at the fifth annual Wilmington Peregrine Falcon Watch. Regulars said this year's four offspring were the liveliest they'd seen yet. Spectators shielded their eyes as the falcons flew in line of the sun and looked through telescopes and binoculars to check out falcons perched on the ledge of the nesting box at the Brandywine Building in downtown.

DELAWARE CAPE GAZETTE

Dewey Beach named five-star beach Beach superstar, that is what you are Dewey Beach. For the second year in a row, Dewey Beach received a five-star beach rating from the Natural Resources Defense Council. Rehoboth Beach received a five-star rating last year but fell to four stars this year because water quality was not monitored more than once a week. Mayor Diane Hanson said, "We are delighted to have been recognized in the top tier again. When enjoying our ocean beaches, Dewey's residents and visitors can be assured that they are swimming in America's cleanest ocean waters." The council annually issues a report on the ocean water quality and public notification systems of the nation's beaches. Dewey was one of 12 beaches in the country to be given a five-star rating, and the only one in Delaware. Ocean City, Md., also received a five-star rating.

Editorial: Prime Hook marshes can be salt and fresh (Tuesday) The long-awaited draft comprehensive plan for Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge offers an extensive analysis of the complex problems there. Yet the three alternatives offered in the plan have all been roundly rejected by those whom the plan will most affect: the people whose homes and hunting grounds are threatened under all three alternatives. Scientists who visited the refuge agree climate change, sea-level rise and human efforts to maintain freshwater marshes threaten the refuge. They recommend using dredge sediment to re-establish saltwater marshes in an area now largely underwater. As presented, this option offers attractive elements, but it's an all- or-nothing approach calling for the end of freshwater marshes. This plan is a long-term solution to a near-term crisis. The plan fails to account for the varied character of sections of Prime Hook, which are defined by the roads that cut across the refuge to the coastline. Unit 3, the largest of four sections, lies between Broadkill and Prime Hook roads. A distinct habitat fed by Prime Hook Creek, Unit 3 has successfully been maintained as a freshwater marsh for more than a century, supporting a rich diversity of wildlife and providing a key and unique freshwater feeding haven for migrating birds.

Lewes looks at getting places without a car Lewes might appear to be a city where walking or bicycling is already easy and safe to do, but there's a plan afoot to take strides to make the city friendlier to those traveling by foot or on two wheels. The City of Lewes' Walkable Lewes Planning Committee is looking at improvements and changes – some that could be made quickly, others more long-term. City officials, people from the business community and land-use consultants did a walking audit of city streets June 14. In the evening, the group met at Lewes Public Library to evaluate its findings, hear public comments and outline possible next steps. “We’re in pretty good shape, but there’s always room for improvement,” Lewes Mayor Jim Ford said to about 40 people at the evening session. Ford said the city is examining ways to improve community links and increase multimodal transportation – walking, bicycling, water taxi, ferry, trolley and jitney service.

Bridge demolition moves forward The old Indian River Inlet bridge is slowly disappearing from the shadow of its successor. An 8- to 10-week demolition project is under way to remove the old bridge and surrounding abutments, but don't expect fireworks. Crews are dismantling the bridge railing and deck; bridge beams and concrete piers will be removed later this summer. Department of Transportation spokeswoman Sandy Roumillat said a mechanical technique that is environmentally sensitive and has a minimal affect on the surroundings will be used to remove the beams and piers. Explosives will not be used to remove the old bridge structure.

USDA Farm Service Agency reminds producers to report crop losses U.S. Department of Agriculture's Delaware Farm Service Agency Executive Director Robert Walls reminds producers to report crop losses resulting from a weather-related disaster event within 15 days of the disaster or when the loss first becomes apparent. This includes crops covered by crop insurance, the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program and crops without insurance coverage. "Crop losses are acres that were timely planted with the intent to harvest, but the crop failed and could not be harvested because of a disaster-related condition," said Walls. "In order to meet FSA program eligibility requirements, producers must report crop losses to their FSA county office within 15 days of the disaster occurrence or when the loss first becomes apparent," he said. Producers who have NAP coverage will be required to report crop losses on FSA form CCC-576 - "Notice of Loss and Application for Payment Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program."

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON GAZETTE

Pratt mayor supports takeover of troubled water system CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Pratt Mayor Gary Fields told members of the Kanawha County Commission on Thursday that he is in favor of turning the town's troubled water plant over to West Virginia American Water Company. Fields told county commissioners Dave Hardy and Hoppy

Shores he thinks the majority of Pratt Town Council and most residents are, too. Earlier this month, Pratt residents received notices that the level of haloacetic acids in their drinking water had exceeded federal limits for more than a year. The average level of acids in the water averaged about 66 parts per billion over a series of four quarterly samples, but haloacetic acid levels had been as high as 110 parts per billion. Federal limits on the acid levels are 60 parts per billion. Hardy asked Pratt town officials, officials for West Virginia American Water and health department Environmental Health Director Anita Ray to attend Thursday's county commission meeting to work out a solution to the town's continuing water problems. County officials have been pushing Pratt to turn over control of the town water plant to West Virginia American Water Company for years. Fields said town officials had a tentative deal with the water company in 2010, but members of the Pratt Utility Board were hostile to the idea. "It's time to let West Virginia American Water come in and do what they do," Hardy said. "It's past time," Fields conceded. Fields said he thought town council and members of the utility board are ready to give up the water plant, which they have clung to largely out of pride. But even if the utility board is still against the idea, Fields said the council has final say.

CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL

Pratt mayor says town likely to allow water company to take over service CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Kanawha County commissioners met with representatives from the City of Pratt and West Virginia American Water Thursday to discuss the possibility of the company taking over the town's water system. A request by Frank Baer, the chief operating officer for Commercial Insurance, to reconsider a previous decision to award the workers' compensation portion of the county's liability insurance to Wells Fargo Insurance Services and Travelers was not taken up. Pratt Mayor Gary Fields believes town council would be willing to allow West Virginia American Water to take over the water plant at the city. The town's water plant is dilapidated and it can no longer provide clean water to residents. The water was been found to be contaminated with haloacetic acids a year ago. The acid forms when chlorine used to treat drinking water reacts with organic material like vegetation. The Environmental Protection Agency permits a level of haloacetic acid of 60 parts per million. However, water provided to Pratt customers over the last year averaged 65.8 parts per million. The city sent about 770 Pratt water customers a notice informing them of the contamination a few weeks ago. Long-term exposure can damage the liver, kidneys, and nervous and reproductive systems. Anita Ray, director of environmental health with the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department, said humans would have to be exposed to high levels of the contaminant over a long period to develop adverse affects. "It could increase chances of getting cancer, but it is very slight," Ray told commissioners Thursday. However, county officials hope West Virginia American Water can invest in the system and bring it up to standards.

Hottest day of the year prompts heat advisory CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- The National Weather Service in Charleston confirmed that Thursday was the hottest day of 2012 so far for Charleston, as the temperature hit 99 degrees.

WBOY-TV

Environmental Groups Hold Marcellus Shale Symposium Two environmental groups gathered at West Virginia University Thursday evening to discuss pollution from Marcellus Shale drilling. The Friends of Deckers Creek and Friends of the Cheat hosted a community symposium on "Air Quality and Health Impacts." The audience heard from two different speakers regarding why air pollution is just as significant of an issue as ground and water contamination. "Air quality is starting to become more relevant as more drilling pads going and people are starting to not only see but sometimes people can also smell emissions that are coming from nearby gas wells," said Elizabeth Wiles, executive director of Friends of Deckers Creek. Wiles said she hopes the people who came out learned more about what they can do to reduce pollution and report issues to the authorities.

WEST VIRGINIA PUBLIC BROADCASTING

National Park Service offers ranger-guided summer activities The National Park Service wants residents and summer visitors to join them for some fantastic site-seeing and fascinating history lessons.

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

As other cities grow, Baltimore continues to shrink Chicago's growing. Atlanta is too. New York added nearly 60,000 new residents. But not Baltimore. At a time when cities across the country are gaining population and young people are flocking to urban centers, Baltimore remains stuck in a decades-long decline. According to estimates released Thursday by the U.S. Census Bureau, the city lost about 1,500 people from April 2010 to July 2011.

Heat wave expected to last a week or more Forecast calls for highs near 100 through Tuesday. A second wave of summer heat is bearing down on Baltimore — one that could last a week or more.

SALISBURY DAILY TIMES

'Perfect storm' ushers in crab shortage FENWICK ISLAND -- Spring's crab glut has quickly become summer's crab shortage. And with crab consumption a July Fourth holiday ritual on Delmarva, crustacean connoisseurs could be in for some disappointment. Despite a spring of plentiful crabs, various takeout seafood shops in the area have been struggling to obtain a full supply for the summer. "It's flip-flopped from the spring," said Dave Long, manager at Ocean View Seafood. While crabs are typically plentiful during the preseason, a cold spell followed by hot temperatures and more wind than she has seen in her 30 years in the business have made the crustacean scarce, said Mary Ellen Ball, co-owner of Tom and Terry's Seafood Market. "It shows you how much nature can turn," she said. "It's Mother Nature." Combine that with a typical summer increase in demand, and there's one outcome. "It's the perfect storm for a shortage," she said. "Right now you can barely get crabs because of the weather problem," she said. What there are plenty of, Long said, are juvenile crabs, but those won't do the trick as they take about a year or two to develop. And Ball's not seeing enough large and jumbo crabs, she said.

Summer not expected to break heat records OCEAN CITY -- Higher-than-average temperatures on the Lower Shore through June are not expected to continue through the rest of the summer with a high enough intensity to break records. In July, August and September, temperatures are expected to clock in at "slightly above normal," with July's outlook at roughly near normal, according to National Weather Service Meteorologist Bridget De Rosa. She garnered her information from the service's climate prediction center, whose employees she calls the "climate go-to people."

MARYLAND GAZETTE NEWSPAPERS

New laws foster environment, business July 1 marks not only the start of the two draggiest summer months and a new fiscal year, but it is also the date a bunch of laws take effect. A few of the more important measures concern the environment, in particular the health of the Chesapeake Bay; others affect the business community. Perhaps the most significant new environmental law requires the 10 largest jurisdictions in the state to collect stormwater remediation fees. Stormwater runoff is a major source of Bay pollution. The fee, the amount of which was left to the discretion of the nine largest counties and Baltimore city, would be based on how much pavement a property contains. Under the legislation, counties and municipalities would plant trees and take other measures to reduce pollution from runoff. A second new law doubles the so-called "flush" tax from \$2.50 to \$5 a month for any household whose wastewater is discharged into the Chesapeake or coastal bays. The flush tax increase is projected to help pay for upgrades to 67 major wastewater treatment plants and decrease the amount of nitrogen pollution flowing into the Bay by 3.7 million pounds a year. Another major environmental bill requires counties to adopt a "tiered" system of rules to restrict new housing served by septic systems. The measure was designed to curb the waste that flows from new housing developments into the Bay. The legislature watered down Gov. Martin O'Malley's stronger, initial proposal. A separate Department of the Environment regulation issued in early May bans the future use of septic systems unless builders install modern technology systems for nitrogen removal.

New Maryland laws target poachers, pollution After watching court hearings of people charged with poaching in the Chesapeake Bay last year, attorney Evan Thalenberg says he came to a realization: Committing the crime was too easy. The rules needed to be tightened, loopholes needed to be closed. New regulations taking effect July 1 will take aim at illegal fishing operations raiding the Bay and try to protect those species that work to filter the water. By keeping closer track of the daily loads caught by commercial watermen and limiting how often fishing licenses can be transferred, supporters expect the law to reduce illegal fishing. That should save money on criminal prosecutions and nurture the bay's struggling oyster population, they believe. The anti-poaching law is one of dozens scheduled to take effect Sunday, impacting the environment, development, farming and even beer brewing. Under existing law, watermen can temporarily transfer their fishing licenses an unlimited number of times, making it difficult for authorities to keep track of how many people were using a single license, said Thalenberg, founder of the Annapolis-based nonprofit Chesapeake BaySavers, which supported the new law adopted by legislators this year. The changes also were backed by the state Department of Natural Resources and the Chesapeake Bay Commercial Fisherman's Association.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Md.)

Flush tax and other laws aimed at protecting environment to take effect July 1 ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Maryland residents will soon be paying more on their sewer bills. The state's "flush" tax on sewer bills will double to \$5 a month, under a law taking effect Sunday. That's an increase from \$30 to \$60 annually to upgrade wastewater treatment facilities to reduce pollution in the Chesapeake Bay. Environmental measures turned out to be a substantial highlight for supporters in this year's regular 90-day legislative session. Laws to limit septic systems and to create fees to fight stormwater pollution also are going on the books. Local governments will have until December to adopt septic limits and a year to set stormwater fees.

VIRGINIA

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH

Editorial: On the Chesapeake Bay: Your oyster The Bay beckoned. On Saturday the car seemingly drove itself from Richmond to Middlesex County, home of the Merroir "tasting room," which overlooks the Rappahannock as it spills into the Chesapeake. The Merroir is affiliated with Rappahannock River Oysters, an aquaculture operation that harvests delectable bivalves. RRO traces its roots to the 19th century; the history of water life runs as deep as the Bay itself. RRO supplies oysters to some of the finest restaurants in New York. Its Rappahannocks, Olde Salts and Stingrays fill sublime cravings. The Rappahannocks and Stingrays come from the Bay, the Olde Salts from Chincoteague. There are good reasons for Virginia to promote aquaculture. RRO is not alone. Thursday's Weekend section reported that Shackleford's restaurant serves oysters from the York River supplied by Greg Garrett Oyster Co. Merroir's oysters on the half shell come with red and green cocktail sauces, as well as vinaigrette. A squeeze of lemon is all that the oysters require. The jest embedded in the tasting room's name delights gourmets and Francophiles. "Terroir" refers to the geographic characteristics unique to an agricultural product's locale. The terroir for wine relates to soil, climate and other factors. "Merroir" would reflect the connection between oysters and the sea (or the sea's tributaries and neighboring bodies of water).

Forecast: Three days of potentially record heat RICHMOND, Va. -- Three days of triple-digit, potentially record-breaking heat should bake the Richmond area today through Sunday. And that should be followed by temperatures in the high 90s through Wednesday, the Fourth of July. "It looks like this is going to be an extended period of hot weather, probably until the middle of next week," said Mike Rusnak, a National Weather Service meteorologist. The forecast calls for highs of 101 degrees today, 103 on Saturday and 100 on Sunday. The records for those dates are 101 today, 103 on Saturday and 102 on Sunday. On Monday through Wednesday, the temperature should hit 98

or 99. The heat index — how the weather feels, including temperature and humidity — should range from 101 to 106 during the six-day spell. People should keep an eye on friends, pets and themselves. "The biggest thing is not to overextend yourself and not stay out in the heat too long, and to make sure you hydrate yourself," said James Foster, another weather service meteorologist.

LYNCHBURG NEWS AND ADVANCE

DEQ fines Campbell County company (Wednesday) The state Department of Environmental Quality fined a Campbell County business \$18,900 for its handling of hazardous waste. The violations, discovered during a routine inspection by DEQ at Industrial Plating Corporation, largely dealt with storing too much hazardous waste and holding it for too long, according to a DEQ consent order filed June 15. A company official said this is the first time the firm has had a violation with the state agency. A January inspection showed the company made deliveries of hazardous waste for treatment in 2008 and 2011 that exceeded the allowable weight for how much can be kept on site. Also, shipments in 2008, 2009 and 2011 were more than 500 days apart, according to the order. State law allows a company that generates hazardous waste to keep it on site for up to 180 days. A permit for hazardous waste storage is required to keep it longer. The inspection found some containers that were not labeled as hazardous waste. Industrial Plating also was not making weekly inspections of containers holding hazardous waste to make sure there were no leaks. The consent order did not define what type of waste was at the facility, but used general terms to describe two wastes' characteristics, said Jeffrey Hurst, regional enforcement manager for the DEQ. One code described a waste as corrosive and the other was defined as "electroplating sludge," as defined by the Environmental Protection Agency. The DEQ came back a week after the initial inspection in January and found all the issues resolved, said Jerry Ford Jr., a senior enforcement specialist for the agency. He said the company put new procedures in place to ship hazardous material for treatment within the six-month limit. Steve Shockley, president of Industrial Plating, said this week the violations were procedural and the company did not "dump" any hazardous waste. "The violations they cited were very minor violations," he said.

MISCELLANEOUS

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT

Appropriations Committee Sends Bill Cutting EPA Funding to House Floor The House Appropriations Committee on June 28 approved a \$28 billion funding bill containing a 17 percent cut in EPA funding and numerous policy riders that would restrict the agency's ability to enforce regulations under the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act. The committee voted 26-19 to move the fiscal year 2013 appropriations bill for Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies (no bill number assigned) to the House floor. The bill would cut EPA's funding to \$7 billion in fiscal 2013, a \$1.4 billion decrease from the fiscal 2012 enacted level. Those cuts would mostly be achieved by reducing funding for the state clean water and drinking water revolving funds and state and tribal grant programs (118 DEN A-6, 6/20/12). The legislation contains a number of provisions that would prohibit appropriated funds from being used for certain regulatory actions, including limiting EPA's ability to develop final guidance updating the definition of waters under the jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act, expanding the stormwater discharge program under Section 402 of the Clean Water Act, and implementing President Obama's National Oceans Policy. The bill also contains a rider that would prevent the Interior Department's Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement from moving ahead with a planned "stream buffer" rule that Republicans say would result in job losses in the coal mining industry.

House Hearing Set on EPA Stormwater, Wastewater Management Policy A House Transportation and Infrastructure subcommittee plans to hold a hearing toward the end of July on EPA's recently issued integrated policy for municipalities to manage stormwater and wastewater overflows. Jonathan Pawlow, the subcommittee's senior water counsel, says the hearing will focus on how best to tweak the language of the Clean Water Act to enable municipalities to alter their discharge permits to comply with the agency's integrated policy. The hearing is an effort

to ascertain whether EPA's final policy document alleviates concerns among municipalities that the agency intends to rely more on enforcement decrees than permits to implement the integrated approach, he says

Whitfield Says PM Rule Could Interfere With Road Construction Projects Rep. Whitfield says EPA's proposed air quality standards for particulate matter could result in far-reaching consequences, including getting in the way of necessary road construction projects. Road projects result in particulate matter emissions, and the proposed rule could restrict such work, Whitfield tells a hearing of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Power, of which he is chairman. EPA formally publishes the proposed rule today. It would strengthen the primary annual standard for fine particulate matter, setting a range between 12 micrograms and 13 micrograms per cubic meter of air, down from 15 micrograms

Agreement on Transport Bill Streamlines Projects' Environmental Review House and Senate conferees file a final surface transportation conference report that would streamline the environmental review process for projects by expanding categorical exclusions and assigning financial penalties to federal agencies that fail to meet review deadlines. The report also transfers \$2.4 billion from the Leaking Underground Storage Tank fund, allocates 80 percent of the fines related to the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill to restoration projects for the Gulf Coast, and contains several other environmental provisions. Provisions on the Keystone XL crude oil pipeline and coal ash regulation were excluded from the agreement.

FOX NEWS

Listening to the Voters: Energy drives swing vote Four years ago, Washington County did something it had not done in 40 years of politics: it went Republican. John McCain was the victor in this picturesque, rolling countryside by four points over then Senator Barack Obama. The shift from blue to red makes Washington, Pennsylvania a political anomaly. It's a democratic leaning region heavily populated with union workers, but according to County Commissioner Diana Irey Vaughan the voting shift can be explained along economic lines. "The recession really hasn't had a huge impact in Washington County. We're third in the nation in job growth and 40 percent of that's due to the Marcellus Shale Plate." The Marcellus Shale Plate, a giant formation of sedimentary rock that runs through New York and Pennsylvania and into West Virginia and Ohio is rich with oil and natural gas and has made this rural county a mini-boomtown. By some estimates there's enough natural gas to supply all of America for the next 25 years - and people working in the energy business understand their financial future depends on a supportive White House.